

MINUTES
PLANNING COMMISSION
OCTOBER 28, 2014 – 7:00 P.M.
TOWN HALL ANNEX – COMMUNITY ROOM 2

Acting Chairman Pritchard called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

I. ROLL CALL

Regular members present: Pritchard, Kane, Munn, Steinfeld
Alternate members present: Fitzgerald, Tarbox, Zod
Absent: Sherrard
Staff present: Reiner, Glemboski, Silsby

Acting Chairman Pritchard appointed Fitzgerald to sit for Sherrard and Steinfeld to sit as Acting Secretary.

II. APPROVAL OF THE FOLLOWING MINUTES OF October 14, 2014

MOTION: To adopt the Planning Commission minutes of October 14, 2014, as written.

Motion made by Steinfeld, seconded by Fitzgerald, so carried 3 in favor, 0 opposed, 2 abstentions (Kane, Munn)

III. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS – None

IV. OLD BUSINESS

1. Subdivision Regulation Amendments – Staff had nothing to report.
2. Plan of Conservation and Development - Planning Commission Workshop Update

Staff stated that the next POCD workshop is scheduled for Wednesday, November 19th at 5:30 p.m. The regular Planning Commission meeting will follow at 7:00 p.m. Staff is currently updating the action plan and section outlines for each, which will be distributed to Planning Commission members for review, prior to sending off to the Consultants for revisions. The importance of meticulously reviewing the Land Use maps, which will also be reviewed at the workshop, was noted.

V. NEW BUSINESS

1. Report of Commission – None
2. Zoning Board of Appeals Referral for November 12, 2014 Public Hearing
 - a. ZBA#14-10 – Pippo Renovations, 156 Ocean View Avenue

Staff reviewed the map and the proposal. The hoop building will be demolished and a 750 square feet 2-story addition is being proposed. A boat

restoration use currently exists, which is grandfathered, and will continue. An apartment will be the primary residential use. Plans, photos and setbacks were reviewed. It was noted that the variance request is relative to the height of the building. Staff stated that this lot can be split legally.

Concerns regarding the additional height of the proposed structure within the setbacks were discussed. Various options for buffering from the property to the north were addressed.

The Planning Commission suggested that if the variance is approved, installing a good visual barrier or eliminating any windows along the north property line for the new addition should be addressed.

b. ZBA#14-11 – Smith Residence, 2 Appletree Lane, West Mystic

Staff reviewed the map and explained the proposal to raise the house above the base flood elevation. Stairs will be added in two different locations on the existing deck, which is the purpose for the setback variance request. Once the project has been completed, the property will then conform to the appropriate flood elevation requirements. The lot coverage will change from 27.7% to 29.6%.

The Planning Commission had no comment.

c. ZBA#14-12 – Martin Residence Addition, 408 Flanders Road

Staff reviewed maps and explained the proposal on this very narrow lot. Setbacks were reviewed. It was noted that this setback and lot width would be what is typical in an RS12 zone.

The Planning Commission had no comment.

3. Zoning Commission Referral for October 1, 2014 Public Hearing (Continued)

a. SPEC343 – Tollgate Plaza, 516-528 Gold Star Hwy – Revised Plans

Staff gave a re-cap of the discussion at a previous Planning Commission meeting and the recommendation made by the Planning Commission on the vehicular circulation on this site. A re-design will be proposed tonight by the applicant.

Matthew White of Angus MacDonald and Gary Sharpe and Associates reviewed the re-design on the new plan as he gave details about the new location of the parking spaces and the 3 proposed fuel pumps. Specifics were given about the primary circulation through the site. Parking will now be adjacent to the store fronts. The owner Nick Sahin was also present.

Staff agreed with the applicant that this re-design is a much better proposal. She added that this project would be brought back to the Planning Commission for review, as a site plan application if the Special Permit is approved. It was also noted that the State Department of Transportation (DOT) will be reviewing this application.

Planning Commission members felt this re-design was much better than the original plan. Inquiries were made about the number of parking spaces required, and the location of the entrances and exits. Inquiries were also made about the location, placement, and width of the 3 pump stations. Information was given about tractor trailers delivering fuel.

The Planning Commission made the following motion:

MOTION: Due to the newly revised plan and based on a review of the Layout Plan: Property of Toll Gate Plaza, LLC dated 10/28/2014, the Planning Commission no longer has a concern with the vehicular circulation through the site.

Motion made by Pritchard, seconded by Steinfeld, so voted unanimously

4. Town of Ledyard Referral for November 13, 2014 Public Hearing
 - a. Zone Text Amendment Application – Ledyard Planning and Zoning Commission

The Planning Commission had no comment.

5. New Applications - None

VI. REPORT OF CHAIRMAN

Pritchard attended and summarized the Committee of Chairpersons meeting that was held on October 20, 2014. He stated that the next POCD Workshop meeting will be held on a Wednesday instead of a Tuesday. The date is November 19, 2014 beginning at 5:30 p.m.

Fitzgerald expressed concerns about the amount of available parking at the Mystic Art Center. He would like to see a survey, or a usage report, showing what spaces are reserved and for whom. Other members agreed and felt that looking into this is a worthwhile concern. Knowing the usage in that lot is very important relative to site plans that go before the Planning Commission. Staff will look into this.

VII. REPORT OF STAFF

- a. Legal Update

Staff stated that two appeals are on-going; Mystic Glen Open Space Re-subdivision and the Oat Re-subdivision. A report will be available for the next meeting.

- b. ASP#14-26 – Poquonnock Plains Park – Temporary Lighting

Staff stated that this application has been withdrawn. The game will be played at Fitch High School instead of Poquonnock Plains Park (PPP). She referred to a memo dated October 22, 2014 that Planner Jones sent out regarding lighting at PPP. Discussion followed about lights not being allowed at PPP. Steinfeld gave information

about what was discussed during the PPP task force meetings. He noted that neighbors were adamantly against lighting at PPP.

The Planning Commission felt that all inquiries about lighting at PPP should come before the Planning Commission before going to the Town Council for review.

A memo will be written to inform Parks and Recreation that all temporary lighting requests for PPP will be sent to the Planning Commission for review.

- c. Blight Ordinance – This item was distributed in the agenda packet for review only.

In regards to other town business, Staff sent a letter dated October 28, 2014 to the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) from the Town of Groton, regarding the Historic Mystic LLC application for a dock and ramp off of the existing public access area. Staff explained what is being proposed and summarized the letter to DEEP. She stated that the Planning Commission will be able to review the Coastal Access Management (CAM) and the water dependent use issue. She added that construction has not yet begun at Central Hall.

Pritchard asked if the Planning Commission is required to review a CAM application for 2 Appletree Lane.

Staff stated that an open house will be held on November 17, 2014 from 6:00 p.m. until 7:30 p.m. at the Town Hall Annex in Room 1, to give the public an opportunity to meet the new Town of Groton Planning Director Jonathan Reiner. It was noted that this is a non-scheduled meeting night.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 8:20 p.m. was made by Steinfeld, seconded by Kane, so voted unanimously.

Margil Steinfeld, Acting Secretary
Planning Commission

Prepared by Robin Silsby
Office Assistant II